

ROCKY MOUNTAIN RAILROAD CLUB  
P. O. BOX 2391  
DENVER, COLORADO 80201

September, 1964

Newsletter No. 61

The September, 1964, meeting of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club will be held at 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 9th, in the basement meeting room of the Western Federal Savings skyscraper -- 718-17th Street, Denver. Our program will be presented by Club member Neal R. Miller of Longmont, who has assembled several unique collections of railroad material over the years. Neal will present for our enjoyment a selection of old-time railroad movies featuring, for instance, films of the Santa Fe made about 1910, as well as such stars as Andy Clyde and Abbott and Costello.

All members of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club and their friends are invited to attend.

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At the August meeting those in attendance thoroughly enjoyed the colorful movies made available for our program by Morrison-Knudsen. The first reel related, in many vivid scenes, the construction in 1959 of 125 miles of 3%-grade, standard gauge railroad thru the forbidding and barren mountains of southern Peru, stretching from the port of Ilo on the Pacific Coast to a tremendous new open-pit copper mining development at Toquepala, 11,000 feet high in the interior.

The second reel illustrated, in scenes more customarily associated with our ideas of jungle areas near the equator, the rehabilitation of a meter gauge, steam-powered railroad serving a large iron ore mining industry on the lower eastern coast of Brazil. Built during the first decade of the present century, the little railroad and the industry it served quite suddenly assumed major importance during the early years of World War II. Reconstruction of the line to handle the gigantic step-up in production of iron ore became a vital necessity to the Allies' war effort and Morrison-Knudsen formed part of the construction combine called upon to handle the work. The contrast, yet compatibility, of traditional hand construction methods alongside use of modern excavation machines, as shown in this interesting film, was striking, indeed.

To conclude the program, our audience was treated to a showing of several beautiful slides of the McCloud River Railroad plowing out the deep snows at the foot of Mt. Shasta last winter, made by our member from England -- Mr. Henry Rishbeth. Then all present were invited to inspect the new historical display of railroad photographs and artifacts which were prize winners in the recent railroad historical contest sponsored by the Western Federal Savings Association and Rocky Mountain News.

By special arrangement with the Savings Association, the elegantly exhibited items in the upstairs lobby of the building were opened outside regular hours especially for inspection by members and guests of the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club. Much interest was shown in the prize winning entries submitted by Club members Richard Ronzio, Charles Ryland, and Robert LeMassena, as well as in the complete collection of Mears passes made available for this display by the outstanding western history buffs, Fred and Jo Mazzulla of Denver. Among these passes is one of the two known gold filigrees issued by the Mears' roads at the height of their prosperity.

Another high point of the exhibit is the original painting by Rocky Mountain Railroad Club member Philip Ronfor, loaned by our organization for this display, showing Colorado Midland ten-wheeler #18 double-heading a five-car passenger train over the long trestle leading to Hagerman Tunnel on the east side of the Continental Divide west of Leadville. Currently seen on the front of the brochure announcing publication by the Club of this history of this famous old Colorado road, the painting is a magnificent piece of art, and is attracting much attention from the public who daily visit this display in downtown Denver.

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As mentioned in the last Newsletter, distribution of brochures announcing this newest Club history publication is progressing under the guidance of Club member Bryant McFadden. Bryant advises that between 4,000 and 5,000 of the brochures already have been addressed, with the work being performed by a number of local members and friends of our organization, as follows:

Mrs. Elna August  
Mrs. John Barry  
Mr. & Mrs. Walker Edwards  
Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Hutchinson  
Miss Mabel Lanning  
Mr. and Mrs. Edward Lewandowski

Mrs. Shirley McFadden  
Toni Morton  
L. Wilson Ruid  
Mrs. Lillian Stewart  
Jackson Thode

As addressing is completed, the brochures are turned over to Mailing Supervisor Bert Fullman, who affixes stamps one by one, and the items are then returned to Bryant for sorting, counting and dispatch to the Post Office. Bryant advises as this is written that orders already received for COLORADO MIDLAND total nearly 550.

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Happily in time for this Newsletter, it was brought to our attention by Club member, and co-author of "The Moffat Road," Rev. Edward T. Bollinger, that exactly sixty years ago - September 2, 1904 - Denver, Northwestern & Pacific ten-wheeler #300 pulled into Corona Pass station with the first passenger train to the top of the world west of Denver. This little three-car outfit inaugurated service which was to provide thrills and never-to-be-forgotten memories for multitudes of people who were privileged to make the trip before construction of the Moffat Tunnel. Sometimes we think we were born too late!!

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The Rocky Mountain Railroad Club during the last two weeks in July served as semi-official Colorado hosts to two visiting railroad men from Switzerland. The pair are currently on a 10-week tour of the North America -- ranging as far north as the White Pass and Yukon and south to Mexico City.

Both are 26 years old; one, Peter Berger, is employed by Brown Boveri, manufacturer of the two new Manitou and Pikes Peak cog units; the other, Willis Kaeslin, is a civil engineer with the Swiss Federal Railways. They have been planning the trip for nearly three years and last spring wrote the Club asking if we could provide them with any information on Colorado railroading. Mountains of correspondence ensued and, upon their arrival in Denver, the Club took over to show them as much as possible about the railroads, old and new, that we have come to know and love. And they in turn had a good deal of information to pass on about Swiss railroading.

While in Colorado, Peter and Willis were toured over the roadbed of the Denver and Salt Lake, had an opportunity to see westbound and eastbound passenger and freight operations at both ends of the Moffat Tunnel, traveled over the grades of the Denver, Boulder and Western, the Colorado Springs and Cripple Creek District and the Florence and Cripple Creek.

The Denver and Rio Grande took them for a cab ride out to Glenwood Springs and return, one way through the Royal Gorge, returning on the Moffat route. The railroad also hosted them on a narrow gauge trip from Alamosa to Silverton.

After two exciting weeks of Colorado railroading, Peter and Willis both observed that their time here had been the high spot of their trip. They added that they would never forget the many friends they had made among Club members, nor would they soon forget the wild and wonderful state of Colorado. We might add that we are grateful for the opportunity to show these two visitors from overseas something about our state and its railroads -- and that we, too, will long remember the many pleasant hours we spent together. It is people like Peter Berger and Willis Kaeslin who help make the railroading hobby so enjoyable.

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Last May 23rd the Burlington observed the centennial of its Chicago suburban service by decorating in gold an old friend of ours -- steam engine 5632 -- and using it to power a special excursion from Chicago to Aurora and return. Handling a consist of 17 double-decker commuter coaches and three power cars, the 5632 hauled what is believed to be a record number of passengers on one train -- more than 3,500 people! Although certainly an attention-getter, can you imagine trying to take pictures of that operation on a typical Rocky Mountain Railroad Club excursion photo run-by??

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Response to the Club's announcement of its second 1964 excursion, operating out of Denver and using Union Pacific's 4-8-4 #8444 Cheyenne to Rawlins, Wyoming, and return, on Sunday, September 13th, is very encouraging. Interest is widespread, inquiries having been received from as far away as Oregon and California, and publicity in Cheyenne, Colorado Springs, Denver and Pueblo newspapers has been well received. With "Las Vegas" dining car facilities, and all the food you can eat during the day, included in the cost of your ticket, this latest Rocky Mountain Railroad Club operation promises to be a bang-up affair.

Arrangments have been made by the Club with operators of the parking lot at Denver Union Station for accommodating, at the northeast (19th Street) end of the parking lot, automobiles of our excursionists for the entire day at a cost of \$1.00 per car, to be paid to the parking lot attendant that morning. For those who have not yet done so, order your tickets now at \$21.00 per adult, \$12.50 for children from 5 thru 11, and join in the fun of riding behind, listening to, observing and photographing high-speed steam over 346 miles of the Union Pacific's main line.

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Information in previous issues of this Newsletter, concerning the activities and trolley operations of the Seashore Trolley Museum at Kennebunkport, Maine, summarized from monthly issues of that organization's bulletins sent to us on an exchange basis, brought interesting responses from Club members Carl Purinton of Boxford, Mass., and Dr. George Rahilly of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., briefing us on another outstanding trolley museum operation in the New York City area. This is the Branford Trolley Museum at East Haven, Connecticut, where 70 old trolleys of virtually every vintage and description are on display or in operation over more than a mile of trackage located on 28 acres of land near New Haven and the resort towns along Long Island Sound.

Operations are from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays, and from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays during the summer. After Labor Day and through November, the Branford Museum will operate only on Sundays from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Although summer is now drawing to a close, those who have an opportunity to visit the East during the coming season of bountiful fall colors should keep in mind this interesting display of old time urban trolley transportation as a point well worth taking the time to visit.

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Other excursions of interest to our members are currently receiving attention. First is the seventh Annual 3-day Kolor Karavan, sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Alamosa, Colorado. Scheduled this year for September 25th, 26th and 27th, this operation covers the Rio Grande narrow gauge from Alamosa to Durango and Silverton and return. Information is available from the Kiwanis Club, care of Dr. R. E. Wick, Adams State College, Alamosa.

The second annual one-day picnic train operation from Alamosa to the summit of Cumbres Pass and return, sponsored by Gamma Gamma Chapter of ESA, is scheduled for Sunday, October 4th -- a week after the Kolor Karavan, with information available from the sorority chapter at Box 568, Alamosa, Colorado

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Manitou & Pikes Peak Railway, the 9-mile cog line where the first excursion operations of The Rocky Mountain Railroad Club took place, has sent one of its new Swiss-made 80-passenger cog trains, and the engine of the second train, back to Switzerland for repairs.

The equipment had not been working right since it was put on the line this spring. In fact, state and city officials were held up for an hour enroute to dedication ceremonies for the new Pikes Peak Summit House on June 15th, when one of the cars broke down. Officials said the diesel engines became overheated as they approached the summit of the 14,110-foot mountain. Similar breakdowns have occurred since that time, and it was finally decided to send the cars back to the locomotive company at Winterthur, Switzerland.

The two new trains were described as the finest and most expensive cog railroad units ever manufactured, and were tested extensively in the Swiss Alps before being sent to Colorado. The railway is currently using its older equipment (manufactured in the United States, with much of the equipment devised in Denver) to carry tourists up the highest cog railway in the world.

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The best passenger safety record in four years was achieved by American railroads in 1963. The railroads carried 310 million passengers a total of 18.5 billion passenger-miles, with only 13 fatalities. Domestic airlines had 48 fatalities, buses 130, and automobiles 28,900.

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The Silverton Standard for August 21 reports that the Silverton operations of the Rio Grande set a new one-day passenger record on Tuesday, August 18th, when 909 passengers rode the line. The season's total through August 20 was 48,564, 10,059 ahead of last year at the same date. To handle the unprecedented crowds, both the "Nomad" and the Rio Grande's business car B-7 were pressed into service.

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With a spread of 20 interesting pictures comprising the photo section, as well as the cover photo on the September, 1964, issue of Trains Magazine, this leader in the rail-fan publication field has graciously saluted one of the many activities sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Railroad Club during its first quarter century. Selected from among more than 300 prints submitted by members in a contest staged late in 1963, the prize winning photos chosen by the magazine's staff run the gamut from steam power on the 25% grades of the Manitou and Pikes Peak through the Galloping Geese of the Rio Grande Southern and 3'6" gauge electric interurbans of the Denver Tramway, to 4-6-6-4's and 4-12-2's on the Union Pacific.

We are indeed grateful to Trains for this fine recognition, and hope that all our Club members will find pleasure in reviewing the photo section of the September issue.

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The actors in Silverton's Blair Street gunfight were taken by surprise recently by an imaginative young tourist when the train pulled into town.

As the call for the coffin arose, the sturdy wooden box was moved into position. It was opened with the usual ceremony, but the actors could hardly disguise their chagrin when they found a body inside! A little girl lay there, patient as could be, her arms folded across her chest, and an impish grin on her face!

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Ted S. McKee, President  
Herbert O'Hanlon, Vice President

Fay L. McKee, Secretary  
Ane O. Clint, Treasurer